

# CITY COUNCIL ATLANTA, GEORGIA

AN ORDINANCE BY: ZONING COMMITTEE 03- () -2168

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE HIGHLAND SCHOOL, LOCATED AT 978 NORTH AVENUE, NE. LAND LOT 16, OF THE 14<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT OF FULTON **GEORGIA** COUNTY, AND CERTAIN PROPERTY ON WHICH IT IS LOCATED, TO THE **OVERLAY** ZONING **DESIGNATION** LANDMARK BUILDING OR SITE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA AND REZONING FROM R-G2 (RESIDENTIAL GENERAL, SECTOR 2) TO R-G2/LBS (RESIDENTIAL GENERAL, SECTOR 2/ LANDMARK BUILDING OR SITE); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING LAWS: AND FOR **OTHER PURPOSES** 

# BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, as follows:

SECTION 1. That the property known as The Highland School, located at 978 North Avenue, NE, Land Lot 16, of the 14<sup>th</sup> District of Fulton County, Georgia, and more fully described as Attachment "A-1" to this ordinance, which attachment is incorporated herein, met the criteria for Landmark Building or Site as set forth in the Nomination Resolution of the Urban Design Commission attached hereto as Attachment "B" and incorporated herein, and is hereby determined to be a Landmark Building or Site pursuant to Chapter 20 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended.

SECTION 2. That the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended, is hereby further amended by designating said property described in Attachment "A-1" to the overly zoning category "Landmark Building or Site" pursuant to Section 16-20.006 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended such that all parts of the site described by the metes and bounds description in Attachment "A-2" and any structures located thereon are so designated.

SECTION 3. That the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, as amended, is hereby further amended so as to provide that the subject property bears, in addition to its R-G2 zoning classification, the overlay zoning designation "Landmark Building or Site", which designation should be officially abbreviated as "LBS" and shall immediately follow the abbreviation for the existing zoning classification. Said property is subject to all zoning regulations contained in the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of

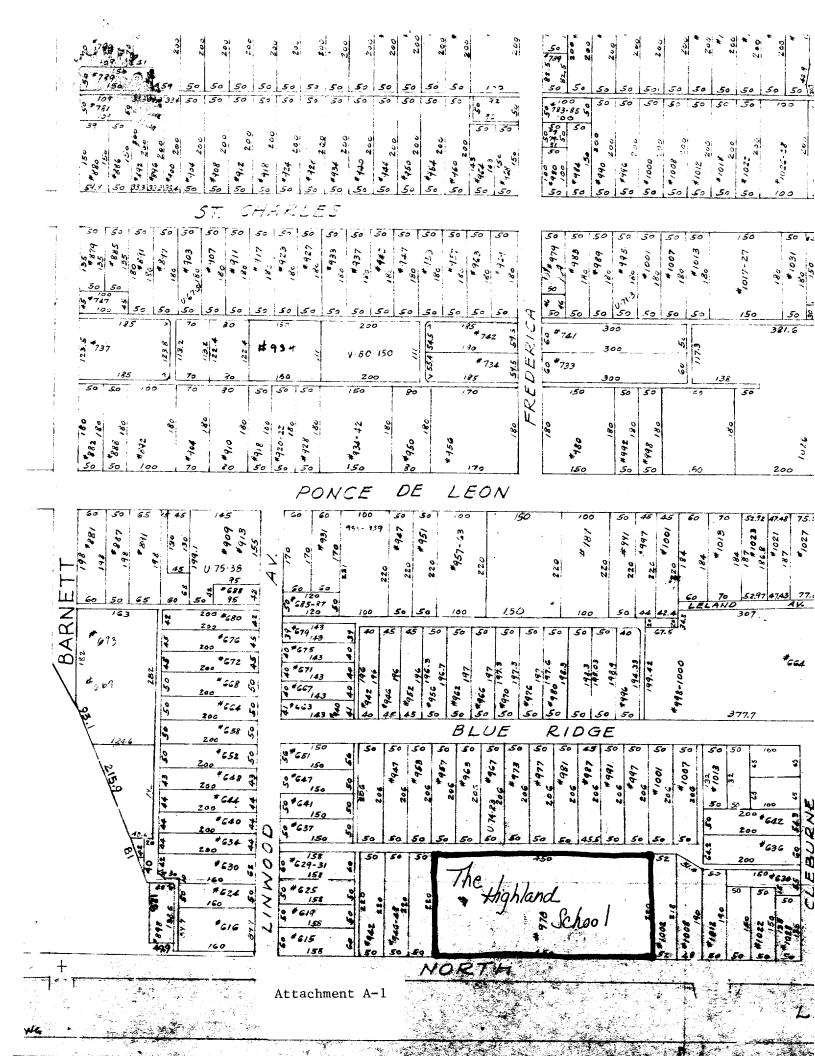
Atlanta applicable to both the previously existing R-G2 and the general regulations governing Landmark Buildings or Sites contained in Chapter 20 of the 1982 Zoning Ordinance, as amended, as well as any other applicable laws and regulations.

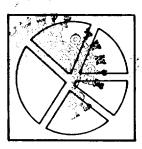
SECTION 4. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are repealed.

ADOPTED by the Council APPROVED by the Mayor

JAN 20, 2004 JAN 28, 2004

Deputy Clerk





ATLANTA URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

ATLANTA CITY HALL 55 TRINITY AVENUE, SW SUITE 3400 ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30335-0331 (404) 330-6200

N-03-03

## RESOLUTION

Whereas, the Executive Director of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission initiated the nomination process by mailing the appropriate Notice of Intent to Nominate to the property owner of the HIGHLAND SCHOOL pursuant to Subsection (b) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances, Section 16-20.005

Whereas, the Executive Director has caused to be conducted extensive research regarding this proposed nomination and has compiled a written report stating the findings and recommendations regarding the historic, architectural and cultural significance of said nomination pursuant to Subsection (d) of said code section, which report, Exhibit "A", is attached to this resolution and is hereby incorporated by this reference; and

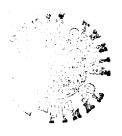
Whereas, a public hearing was held by this Commission to consider said nomination after appropriate public notice was provided as required by Subsection (e) of said code section; and

Whereas, this Commission has reviewed and considered said designation report as well as all other testimony, documentation and other evidence present to it, including the testimony of all interested members of the public and the property owner pursuant to Subsection (e) of said code section; and

Now therefore be it resolved by the Urban Design Commission of the City of Atlanta as follows:

**Section 1.** That the designation report prepared by the Executive Director of the Urban Design Commission is hereby adopted by this Commission and shall constitute the Findings of Fact upon which this nomination is based.

Section 2. That the Commission hereby determines that the Highland School, a map of which delineating all boundaries is attached hereto as Exhibit "B", hereby incorporated by this reference, is architecturally, historically, and culturally significant and is hereby determined to be eligible for designation to the category of Landmark Building or Site (LBS) as meeting, at a minimum, the eligibility criteria set forth in Section 16-20.004(b)(1), specifically including subsections a., b., and c. of this code section. The Highland School is located at 978 North Avenue, N.E., in Land Lot 16 of the 14<sup>th</sup> District of Fulton County, Atlanta, Georgia.



Section 3. That the Commission hereby further determines that said Highland Schoo9l meets the criteria set froth in Section 16-20.004(b)(2)a., specifically including those criteria in the following groups: Group I (1) (2) (3); Group II; and Group III.

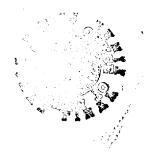
Section 4. That the Commission, having determined that The Highland School meets or exceeds the criteria as set forth herein, hereby nominates The Highland School to the category of Landmark Building of Site (LBS) pursuant to Section 16-20.005(e)(3).

**Section 5.** That the Commission hereby directs the Executive Director to transmit this resolution including all supporting documentation to the Chair of the Zoning Committee of the Atlanta City Council, to the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Community Development, and to notify by first class mail the owner of The Highland School.

Approved and nominated by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission on November 24, 2003.

Danita Brown, Vice Chair

Atlanta Urban Design Commission



Deed Book 34502 Pg 357
Juanita Hicks
Clerk of Superior Court
Fulton County, Georgia

#### EXHIBIT "A"

ALL THAT TRACT or parcel of land, lying and being in Land Lot 16 of the 14th Land District, City of Atlanta, Georgia, and being Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 of Block 31 of Map of Copenhill recorded in Plat Book 5, Pages 64 and 655, and Plat Book 6, Page 196, and being more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at the point formed by the intersection of the eastern Right-Of-Way of Linwood Avenue, a 50' Right-Of-Way and the northern Right-Of-Way of North Avenue, a 50' Right-Of-Way;

THENCE running easterly along the northern Right-Of-Way of North Avenue for 318.00 feet to 'PK' nail set in the side walk at the corner with Lot 16 and the POINT OF BEGINNING;

THENCE departing the Right-Of-Way and running along the side line of Lot 16 N 00° 12' 37" E for 220.43' to an iron pin set on the southern margin of 20' alley;

THENCE running along the southern margin of the alley, S 89° 59' 52" E for 450.00' to an iron pin set at the corner with Lot 6;

THENCE running along the side line with Lot 6, S 00° 11' 32" W fro 220.50' to an iron pin found on the northern Right-of-Way of North Avenue;

THENCE running along the Right-of-Way of North Avenue, N 89° 59' 18" W for 450.07' to a 'PK' nail set and the POINT OF BEGINNING.

Said tract containing 99,217 square feet or 2.2777 acres.

Exhibit A-16

HIGHLAND SCHOOL

(Ninth Ward School Building/
J. S. Candler Public School)

978 North Avenue NE

Fronting 900' on the north side of
North Avenue, NE

14<sup>th</sup> District, Land Lot 16

Fulton County, City of Atlanta
Existing Zoning R-G2

N-03-03 Proposed Designation: Landmark Building-Exterior

Constructed: 1911 Additions: 1929, 1937

Architect: Edward E. Dougherty

The story of the Highland School is also the story of an early twentieth century suburban neighborhood of Atlanta. Known as Poncey-Highland, supposedly for the names of two of the major streets of the area, Ponce de Leon Avenue and North Highland Avenue, this neighborhood was developed during the first decades of the twentieth century. The developers set aside five lots for the purpose of having a school located within their subdivision, which they could use as a selling point.

## PONCEY-HIGHLAND NEIGHBORHOOD

From 1911 to 1972, Highland School was the neighborhood elementary school for Poncey-Highland, a small residential neighborhood which lies south of Ponce de Leon and west of Moreland Avenue. The demolition, which began in the late 1960s for a proposed Stone Mountain Tollway, and continued in the 1980s in anticipation of the Presidential Parkway, marks the present southern boundary and both sides of Linwood Avenue the western boundary of the area, which has been proposed for historic district listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The commercial corridor along the south side of Ponce de Leon is physically connected to the proposed district and is included within its boundaries. This corridor includes at least one important complex, the Briarcliff Plaza shopping center built in 1939, a nationally recognized example of an early "strip" shopping center, and a type of development, which marked the increasing importance of the automobile as a primary means of travel in the city. The striking Art Deco/Streamline Moderne architecture of the Plaza has been retained.

The residential sections of Poncey-Highland were platted at different times by two developers. The eastern half of the district, between Ponce de Leon, Moreland, North and Highland Avenues was first platted in 1905 by Thomas M. Clarke (Fulton County Plat Book 2, page 179, dated June 1905). In fact, the present day Seminole Avenue was called Clarke Avenue in 1905. This plat showed a typical middle-class suburb layout of small single-family lots. However, in 1913, Clarke changed the plat of the area to the configuration, which it still has today (Fulton County Plat Book 5, page 151, dated January 1913). This part of Poncey-Highland now consists mostly of apartment buildings. Interspersed with the apartments are houses, a small hotel and a number of

restaurants and small commercial buildings. North Highland Avenue is the most commercial street in the district other than Ponce de Leon.

The western part of Poncey-Highland was developed by William Candler, who bought it from the Copenhill Land Company in 1920. It was probably conceived as a streetcar suburb similar to nearby Virginia-Highland. This section of Poncey-Highland remains the most intact, consisting primarily of single-family houses, with bungalows comprising the majority of the buildings. The earliest development occurred on the northern edge closest to the trolley line, which ran along Ponce de Leon. Later homes showed the growing influence of the automobile with their driveways and small one-car garages located in the back of the lots. Lots in this section are uniformly 50' wide with 25' setbacks. Even today, the houses retain typical landscaping from the pre-World War II period, with mowed front lawns and shrubs planted near the homes. Candler also was involved in the development of the nearby Plaza shopping center.

Institutional buildings in the area are two churches and a school. The former Druid Hills Methodist Church building is today used by the Salvation Army as their church. This handsome neo-classical structure is located at 675 Seminole Avenue, near the corner of Blue Ridge Avenue. The building was designed by the Atlanta architectural firm of Ivey & Crook and was constructed in 1923. The large Druid Hills Baptist Church building was designed by Dougherty and Gardner, an architectural firm headed by Edward Emmett Dougherty, the same architect who designed Highland School. The church building was completed in 1928, and stands on the southeast corner of Ponce de Leon and Highland Avenues. The Highland School is located at 978 North Avenue in the middle of residential Poncey-Highland.

# THE HIGHLAND SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE

The Highland School was built in three stages. The original building was constructed in 1911, designed by Edward E. Dougherty. In 1929 an auditorium was added on the west side of the original building. A two-story annex housing four classrooms, boys' and girls' bathrooms and an additional staircase was added on the east end in 1937. The Highland School was in active use as a school until 1972. The handsome two-story brick building is located on the north side of North Avenue with the main elevation facing south.

Designed in a restrained classical style, and constructed of orange/red/brown brick with stone, cream-colored terra cotta and white painted wood accents, the original school building was symmetrical with brick quoins accenting the corners. The building has a recessed central section with the main entrance, and a wing to either side. Two additional entrances were located on the east and west ends, but have been eliminated by later additions to the building. These were marked with an elliptical arched opening, and featured a large window above, which would have lighted the stairs inside the building. Belt courses delineate the basement (granite and terra cotta), first floor (terra cotta) and second floor (terra cotta). The windowsills of the original building are also terra cotta. A projecting cornice marks the top of the second floor, with a decorative classical entablature emphasizing the recessed central section. Raised letters, in the center of the

entablature, spell out HIGHLAND SCHOOL. A stepped parapet of brick tops the center section and lower parapets are found on the wings to either side.

The entrance, located in the center section, is deeply recessed and features a compass-headed arched opening of terra cotta with keystone and cornice. It is reached by a set of broad concrete steps. Another set of steps leads from the North Avenue public sidewalk onto the school grounds. Double doors with a transom above are set well within the arched space. On either side of the central door, paired four over four windows are located on both floors, and smaller windows mark the lower (basement) level. A large, tripartite window with a transom and terra cotta surround is located above the entrance. A small cartouche is in the center of the cornice above the window. Separated from the main center section by decorative brick piers are two smaller windows, six over six, which make the transition between that section and the wings on either side.

Each of the projecting wings on the primary (south) facade features a grouping of five windows on the first and second floors. The six over six wood double-hung windows are still present and give the building much of its presence today. Three windows, also six over six, but much smaller, allowed light into the basement level of each wing.

Due to the sloping lot, the basement on the back of the building is at grade level. The north (rear) elevation echoes the front with a slightly recessed central section surrounded by projecting wings. A large chimney is centrally positioned on this side of the building where the boiler room was located. Two (or more) single doors with transoms, allowed entry into the basement. The window pattern of the wings echoes the main facade; the center section has triple windows.

The auditorium, built in 1929, is located on the west end of the building. It is also constructed of red brick, and is set back considerably from the front of the original school building. Three sets of double doors located in a projecting terraced entry gave access from the outside, and small windows are located above them. These doors have surrounds of soldier bricks with square concrete inserts on the upper corners. On the back of the building, small one-story additions project from the northeast and northwest corners of the auditorium, and the north end is stucco over brick. The west elevation of the auditorium has two levels, with the main level being the upper one. This level has five sets of tall double windows, four over four wood double-hung with a transom above. Two similar windows are located on the east side of the auditorium. There are smaller windows on the lower level of the west elevation.

The 1937 classroom addition on the east end of the original building added four classrooms, a stair accessible from the outside, and both boys' and girls' bathrooms. It is similar in style to the earlier school building, but lacks the decorative details. Set back slightly on the street side, the front elevation has only one window located above a double door, which forms the entrance to the staircase. The rear elevation of this addition projects much further behind the original building and also has no windows. Where the addition connects to the original building, broad concrete steps give access to the first floor and stair through double doors with transom. The triple windows on the east



elevation of the addition are the same six over six as the original building, and are the same on both floors. They have concrete sills. The fenestration consists of two groups of triple windows on each end with two smaller single windows in the center of the east facade.

The interior layout was typical for a school of that era. The central corridor ended in identical staircases on either end. Classrooms were located on both sides of the corridor. Classroom doors had transoms that could be opened to allow additional air into the rooms. The additions on either end of the original building did not change its layout.

Today the exterior of the building seems unchanged from its 1937 appearance, despite its current renovation into condominiums. The original windows are still present and in good condition. Little remained inside as the interior had been radically altered in the 1970s after the school was closed. At that time it was converted into offices that were used by the Atlanta school system until the late 1990s when the building was put up for sale.

#### SCHOOL HISTORY

The Highland School is located in the Poncey-Highland residential suburb of Atlanta, on the eastern edge of the city. It is in a potential historic district and has already been designated a contributing building in the initial nomination paperwork for that district.

The school is located in the Fourteenth District, Land Lot sixteen, and consists of lots 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of land originally developed by the Copenhill Land Company. According to the Atlanta Public School archives, the City of Atlanta, Department of Public Schools, using bond funds purchased the land from the Copenhill Land Company on April 26, 1910 for \$5,000. The cornerstone was laid on June 18, 1911 "with impressive Masonic ceremonies," and the school appears on the Sanborn map for that year. It was first known as the Ninth Ward School Building, but had been renamed the J. S. Candler Public School by the time the 1911 Sanborn map came out. This was in recognition of the Candler family, specifically Judge John S. Candler. Shortly after, it became known as the Highland School.

The Atlanta Public School archives contain some interesting facts about the school. In 1913 a request was made that 1¢ lunches be served. By 1920, the school was already overcrowded, and in 1924 additional space was added via three "portables;" that is, temporary buildings. A Sanborn map from the 1920s shows the three temporary buildings located west of the school building. A recommendation was made in 1923 that kindergarten classes be established, and a historic photograph on file at the Atlanta History Center shows a kindergarten class in front of one of the temporary buildings.

Minor alterations to the school took place in 1920, 1927 and 1941. A 7000 square foot addition, the auditorium, was built on the west end in 1929. Once again, in the mid-1930s, the school became overcrowded, and in 1937 another wing was added on the east end of the building. This wing contained four classrooms, boys' and girls' bathrooms, and a staircase. It was a Works Progress Administration (WPA) funded project, which

would have cost approximately \$33,000, but because of WPA assistance was only \$5,500. In the years following World War II, the school population of the neighborhood declined as families with school-age children moved to the suburbs. The school remained in operation until 1972 when it was discontinued. The school system then used the building as offices until the late 1990s when it was put up for sale. A "history" of the school written in 1928 describes it as the home of "eight hundred happy, eager, alert children and twenty-two conscientious, earnest teachers." At the time it was built in 1911-1912, North Avenue was unpaved and embankments used by Confederate soldiers in the Battle of Atlanta were still visible across the street. Mrs. Cola Spears was the first Principal, and served for four years, followed by Miss Gertrude Corrigan, who was still principal in 1928. When she took over enrollment was three hundred fifty students. By 1928, the school was "graduating" to Junior High more than one hundred pupils a year. The most famous student from the Highland School is Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Alfred Uhry, author of *Driving Miss Daisy* and *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*.

#### **EDWARD EMMETT DOUGHERTY**

The Highland School was designed by a prominent architect of that day, Edward E. Dougherty, who was born in Atlanta in 1876, and practiced architecture there from 1905 until he moved to Nashville, Tennessee in 1916. He died in Nashville during November 1943. Dougherty received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Georgia in 1895. He then enrolled at the Cornell University School of Architecture and received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from that school after three years. His next step was to enroll in the course of studies at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He completed that course work, received his diploma, and traveled extensively in Europe. When he returned to the United States in 1905, Dougherty set up an office in the Candler Building. One of his first commissions was the design of the agricultural hall for the University of Georgia, Conner Hall. In 1907 he was elected a member of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

During the time he practiced in Atlanta, between 1905 and 1916, Dougherty designed several schools, the Druid Hills Golf Club, the Imperial Hotel, and numerous houses. He also married in 1907, and fathered two sons (born in1912 and 1917). Dougherty was considered to be an architect in the Beaux Arts influenced American Renaissance tradition. His work reflected a combination of historic styles with some modern influence found in such designs as the Imperial Hotel.

After moving to Nashville, he organized the firm of Dougherty and Gardner, and was a partner until 1930 when the firm disbanded. He continued his architectural practice as the senior member of Dougherty, Wallace and Clemmons, later Dougherty and Clemmons, until 1942. He designed the Belle Meade Clubhouse and Golf Course, the Belle Meade Apartments and many residences in Nashville as well as numerous buildings throughout the southeast. During the 1920s his firm seems to have specialized in churches, with projects in several cities. Dougherty and Gardner designed the Druid Hills Baptist Church in 1928, another important building in this potential historic district, and one of his best-known works.

#### **CRITERIA**

Group I (2) Group II (1) (2) (3) (9) (10) (11) Group III (2)

#### **FINDINGS**

The proposed nomination of the Highland School meets the above-referenced criteria as well as the minimum criteria for a Landmark Building or Site as set out in Section 16-20.004 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Atlanta.

### **REFERENCES**

Ashkinaze, Carole, "Neighbors Who Have a Cause," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, October 29, 1977, Section 4-B.

Atlanta City Directories. Located at the Atlanta History Center.

Atlanta Public School Archives. Documents include facilities information, reminiscences and historic photographs.

Atlanta Urban Design Commission, list of historic buildings in Atlanta, 1978.

Cooper, Walter G., Official History of Fulton County. Atlanta: 1934, pp543-545, 554-555.

Druid Hills Baptist Church, Atlanta, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, July 1914 - July 1939. Booklet, in Atlanta History Center "subject file."

Engelhardt, N. L., and Strayer, *Report of the Survey of the Public School System of Atlanta, Georgia,* school year 1921-1922. New York: Division of Field Studies, Institute of Educational Research, Teachers College, Columbia University. Two Volumes, Volume 1, p. 230.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, architect's file on Edward Emmett Dougherty.

Gibson, Beth, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Historic District Information Form for Poncey-Highland Historic District, no date.

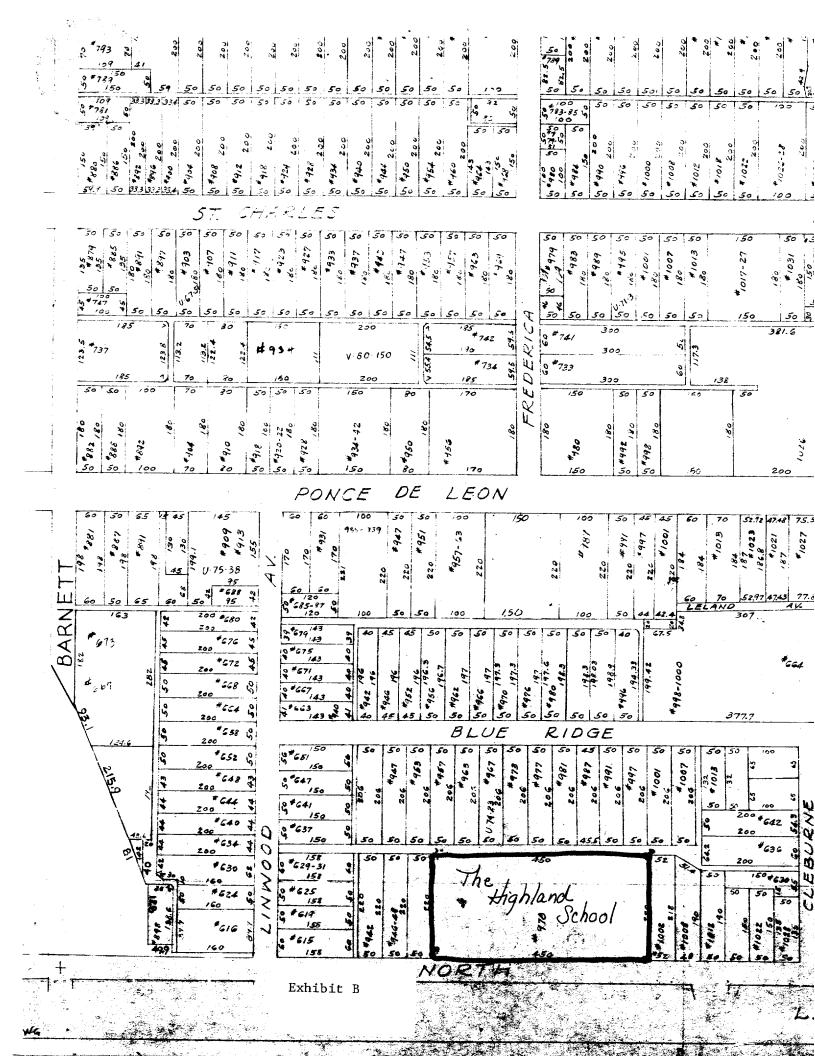
Glass, Dudley, Men of Atlanta. Atlanta: Blosser-Williams Co., 1924.

Goldsmith, Helen, Deborah Eaves and Rolayne Venator, National Register of Historic Places nomination form for Poncey-Highland Historic District. Prepared for Georgia State University, Heritage Preservation course, 1989.

Ladson, Henrietta O'Brien, "Edward Emmett Dougherty and the American Renaissance." Master of Arts Thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, 1990.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for 1911, 192, 1932 and 1931 updated to 1950. On microfilm at the Atlanta History Center.

Vasile, Thomas C., "The Briarcliff Plaza." Paper for Historic Preservation and Conservation, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1985.



## Atlanta City Council

Regular Session

03-0-2168 DESIGNATE HIGH SCHOOL @978 NORTH AVENUE Z-03-83 OVERLAY ZONING LANDMARK BUILDING ADOPT

YEAS: 11
NAYS: 0
ABSTENTIONS: 0
NOT VOTING: 2
EXCUSED: 0
ABSENT 3

Y Smith Y Archibong Y Moore Y Mitchell Y Starnes B Fauver Y Martin Y Norwood Y Young Y Shook Y Maddox Y Willis B Winslow NV Muller B Boazman NV Woolard

### □Consent □V Vote ☑RC Vote Zand □1st & 2nd □ 3rd Readings COUNCIL ACTION **MAYOR'S ACTION** MUNICIPAL CLARK JAN 2 0 2004 CERTIFIED MAYOR Fav, Adv, Held (see rav. side) Fav, Adv, Hold (see rev. side) Committee Committee Members Refer To Members Chair Officer Refer To Actions Chair 퉏 First Reading Fav, Adv, Held (see rev. side) Committee Committee Committee Weld (see クラグ Members Refer To Refer To Actions O The Tr Chair Date 1/Chair THE NORTH AVENUE, NE, LAND LOT 16, OF THE ZONING DESIGNATION OF LANDMARK GEORGIA AND CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY ON WHICH IT IS LOCATED, TO THE OVERLAY BUILDING OR SITE PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 20 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA AND REZONING FROM R-G2 G2/LBS (RESIDENTIAL GENERAL, SECTOR 2/ LANDMARK BUILDING OR SITE); TO REPEAL CONFLICTING LAWS, AND FOR OTHER DISTRICT OF FULTON COUNTY. 4-60-6 HIGHLAND SCHOOL, LOCATED AT (RESIDENTIAL GENERAL, SECTOR 2) TO ZRB+ Zoning 03- ○ -2168 DESIGNATING (Do Not Write Above This Line) ADOPTED BY JAN 2 6 2004 COUNCIL 1st ADOPT 2nd READ & REFER 121103 REGULAR REPORT REFER BY: ZONING COMMITTEE ADVERTISE & REFER ORDINANCE CONSENT REFER AN OKDINANCE Date Referred PURPOSES Referred To: